

Niflheim Academy

by Araceil

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1. Chapter 1

****NIFLHEIM ACADEMY****

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I do not own Harry Potter, Abhorsen, Mahou Sensei Negima, Avatar, One Piece, Fairy Tail, Shadow Hearts, or Monster Hunter. I'm just playing with them.

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****CHAPTER ONE**_**

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"And what exactly did you want with me, Lucius?" Dumbledore asked politely, a clear blue fire blazing in his eyes as he stared down the Pureblood who had so rudely invaded Hagrid's home in the dead of night.

"_Dreadful_ thing, Dumbledore," Mister Malfoy declared lazily as if he didn't notice the disapproval, rummaging under his cloak for a long roll of official looking parchment which he waved somewhat mockingly in the headmaster's general direction before unrolling. "But the governors feel it's time for you to step aside. This is an Order of Suspension â€" you'll find all twelve signatures on it," he explained handing it over with a flourish as the headmaster stoically accepted the parchment and scanned it carefully. "I'm afraid we feel you're losing your touch. How many attacks have there been now?" he asked slyly, "Two more this afternoon, wasn't it? At this rate, there'll be no Muggleborns left at Hogwarts, and we all know what an _awful_ loss that would be to the school," he lamented sarcastically, the faintest shadow of a triumphant smirk curling the edge of his lips as he inclined his head.

Minister Fudge paled, "Oh, now, see here, Lucius," he blustered, looking alarmed, "Dumbledore suspended... no, no... last thing we want just now..."

Mister Malfoy rolled his eyes, "The appointment â€" or suspension â€" of the Headmaster is a matter for the governors, Fudge," the former Slytherin pointed out smoothly, gesturing elegantly with one hand as he tilted his head, "And as Dumbledore has failed to stop these attacks..." he trailed off meaningfully with a significant look before glancing to the stony faced headmaster.

"But I have a solution!" Fudge exclaimed, fiddling with his bowler hat and frowning a little, "One... I dare say will now actually work better with the governors' decision, upon second thought"

Harry and Ron exchanged nervous glances under the cover of the invisibility cloak, they didn't like the sound of that.

"Oh? Do tell, Minister, do well," Mister Malfoy drawled condescendingly, looking bored.

Fudge glanced quickly at Dumbledore before nervously mopping at his sweaty forehead with a chequered handkerchief, "Well, you see, it's all rather _obvious_, isn't it? This Heir of Slytherin malarkey. Salazar Slytherin was most well known for being a Parselmouth, amongst other things, a talent we know is hereditary; You-Know-Who is a known descendent who also speaks to snakes; the crest of Slytherin house is a serpent â€" it stands to reason that Slytherin's monster would obviously be a snake of some description," the portly politician explained. Harry felt Ron palm his face behind him, murmuring about why hadn't they thought of that. Harry meanwhile, began to feel a little bit sick as he began to get an idea of where Fudge was going with all this.

"And I'm assuming you have a point to this, Fudge?" Mister Malfoy sneered impatiently, making the Minister flinch.

"Of course, of course! Err, y-yes, well, people talk, you know? And given recent events, and discoveries, bearing in mind that the monster is likely to be a snake, some people at the Ministry â€" not me â€" are beginning to wonder if You-Know-Who didn't go after the Potters because he didn't want competition, and while I don't think for one minute that Mister Potter is responsible for the attacks, the fact remains that he's the only one capable of controlling the monster that we know of, and â€" " he rambled sweating nervously in his pinstripes as Dumbledore's eyes went colder than ever, and Hagrid began to swell and turn red with rage, while Mister Malfoy's dark eyes glittered with something like glee. Harry felt like someone had shoved a hand into his chest and squeezed his lungs shut, he couldn't breathe.

Hagrid exploded, making everyone jump, including their hidden audience.

"JEST WHAT ARE YEH TRYIN' TO INSINUATE?!" he roared, starting forward only to stop as Dumbledore's arm shot out to bar his way while Fudge squawked and scrambled backwards in shock, thankfully his bellow had masked the sound of Harry's gasp as his lungs finally decided to start working again, he shook violently under Ron's arm, the red head shifting a bit closer and clamping a hand down on his shoulder beneath the cloak. "THA' HARRY IS RESPONSIBLE FER ALL'A THIS?! THA' A TWELVE YEAR OLD BOY WOULD â€" I OUGHTTA â€" " he made a violent handmotion and stepped forward again, ignoring Dumbledore's arm against his stomach, only to fall silent when Mister Malfoy snorted nastily.

"Twelve isn't too different from thirteen," he retorted unpleasantly, eyeing the groundskeeper with a malicious smile. "How old were you when Headmaster Dippet â€" "

"I will never allow one of my students to be expelled without evidence of wrong-doing, Cornelius," Dumbledore interrupted severely, peering down his long crooked nose at the Minister who fidgeted a moment, looking guilty.

"Ahhh, but Dumbledore, there's nothing for you to allow, is there?" Malfoy interrupted with dark amusement, "Did you forget? You've been suspended as Headmaster of Hogwarts, there is nothing you can do to stop him," he explained triumphantly as Dumbledore went very very still.

"It is merely a precaution, Albus," Fudge pleaded quietly, like a child desperately seeking parental approval. "For the peace of mind of the public, once the Heir is caught, Mister Potter can resume his education at Hogwarts free and clear. But for now... The Ministry must be seen to do something, Albus. I hope you understand..."

"You are making a grave mistake, Cornelius," Dumbledore stated ominously, his eyes like chips of ice as he practically loomed over everyone in the room, even Hagrid, with the weight of his disapproval.

Fudge seemed to wilt even as he straightened up, "We shall see. Hagrid, if you would?" he asked, stepping to one side and gesturing to the door, "Auror Dawlish will escort you to the Ministry for processing while I speak to Madam McGonagall about Mister

Potter."

Hagrid looked like he would have rather fed the Minister to Fluffy, piece by piece. "Yeh're a blithering idiot who ought go an' boil his head. 'Arry's a good lad. _Heir o' Slytherin_, an' I'm the Queen o' Tir-nan-ogg," he scoffed darkly, voice dripping with a vicious brand of bitter sarcasm that Harry had never heard from the groundskeeper before. "Yeh'll regret this day, mark me, yeh'll regret it!" he snarled as he stomped out.

Dumbledore carefully rolled the Order of Suspension up and tucked it into his sleeve, "Actions, like words, once taken cannot be reversed," he chimed in solemnly as he swept after the half-giant. "I hope you are prepared for the backlash, Cornelius," he stated benignly.

"Worry about yourself, Dumbledore," Malfoy sneered, "and where it is you're going to be sleeping from now on."

Dumbledore sniffed dismissively, "I will always worry about my students over myself, Lucius," he admonished mildly, "They need only reach out, and ask, and I shall do everything within my power to aid them."

The blond wizard scoffed, making clear what he thought of _that_ sentiment as the former headmaster left the hut.

And with that, they left. The door swinging shut behind Minister Fudge, and Harry's legs giving out beneath him in disbelief and horror. The thud of his knees hitting the floorboards muffled by Fang's desperate keen as he scratched on the door between him and his person. Slowly, Ron stripped out of the invisibility cloak, his voice stuck somewhere between his throat and his chest, unable to even _think_ as what just happened refused to sink in.

With absolutely _no_ justification...

The Minister of Magic had expelled Harry Potter from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Ron swallowed, could he even _do_ that? Just... ruin some kid's entire future because he wanted to without anyone able to say anything? Dumbledore could, had tried, would have tried, but couldn't because Malfoy's father had done _something_ to make the board of governors dismiss the headmaster and -

He shuddered, grabbing his bestfriend's arm, "Harry," he croaked, "C'mon, we have to go! If Fudge shows up at the tower and we're not in there..." he trailed off, imagination wild with terror. If the Minister were willing to expel his bestfriend for just being a convenient target, then how would he react if Harry actually made it LOOK like he was the Heir? Wondering around after dark. He might throw him in Azkaban!

Somehow he managed to push, pull, drag, and cajole his insensate bestfriend up to Gryffindor Tower under the cover of the cloak, once into Gryffindor Tower he just seemed to freeze, staring up at everything as if it were the last time he would ever lay eyes on it. Ron quickly pulled the cloak off and, breaking all forms of etiquette, shoved it into Harry's front pocket while trying not to

cringe at how his brothers' would react to seeing him rummaging in a mate's pocket. Bad enough he had to put up with jokes about hunting for lose change from Malfoy, he didn't want to hear it from the twins, or the inevitable lectures from Percy about theft.

It wasn't a moment too soon as at that moment, the Portrait door swung open admitting a white faced, thin lipped Professor McGonagall and a stony faced Minister Fudge. Ron shifted protectively in front of Harry and glared at the Minister through his quivering lower lip. He'd lost Hermione, he couldn't " _wouldn't_ " lose Harry now!

Professor McGonagall opened her mouth but Ron found himself cutting her off without thinking, "We already know. We were there, in Hagrid's house when Fudge explained it. We wanted to ask him about the Chamber, about when it opened last time. You _can't_ expel Harry! Not just because he's a Parselmouth! That's not fair!" he shouted, gripping his bestfriend's shoulders tightly as if to shield him from their plans. He could feel Harry shaking, the faintest of hitches in his breath that he knew from experience with Ginny that heralded tears and felt something hot and ugly _boil_ in his gut. "HE'S NOT THE HEIR! HERMIONE'S IN THE HOSPITAL WING AND HIS OWN MUM WAS A MUGGLEBORN! SO WHAT IF HE CAN SPEAK TO SNAKES? HE DIDN'T EVEN _KNOW_ HE COULD! HE JUST THOUGHT EVERYONE COULD DO IT! YOU CAN'T EXPEL HIM!"

"Ron? Professor? What's going on?"

The whole of Gryffindor Tower was awake now, stumbling down the stairs in their night clothes, rubbing sleep from their eyes or staring in confusion at the confrontation happening below. At the way Ron Weasley was curled protectively around a violently shaking Harry Potter, the Minister looking alarmed and ashen faced while Professor McGonagall looked suspiciously bright eyed and stony faced.

"P-perhaps we should take this else " the Minister began only for the youngest Weasley son to blow up again, turning to his elder brother and pointing an accusing finger at the Minister.

"HE ARRESTED HAGRID FOR NO REASON AND NOW HE WANTS TO EXPEL HARRY JUST FOR BEING A PARSELMOUTH!" the red head bellowed, red faced and frantic, "HE CAN'T! IT'S NOT FAIR!"

"Life isn't fair, Mister Weasley!" the Minister suddenly interrupted with a snap, "Like it or not, Mister Potter has been expelled, and if you don't want to end up in a cell in Azkaban for obstruction of justice you'll quiet down and do as you're told!"

Murmurs and protests went up amongst the Gryffindors, always easy to rile and get worked up over a perceived injustice. Even those who had been playing with the idea of Harry being the Heir of Slytherin were getting wound up, this wasn't how it was supposed to be done, wasn't how it should be. Where was the trial, the evidence, the proof? Not even the Minister could expel someone, or throw them in Azkaban, without proof!

"DO IT THEN!" the red head roared, voice easily tearing through the clamour beginning to kick up in the tower, squaring up to now red faced Minister, his blood _roaring_ in his ears, burning like fire

under his skin. "GO ON THEN! ARREST ME! YOU SEEM TO BE DOING IT TO EVERYONE ELSE!"

"RON NO!" Harry suddenly yelled, grabbing him and yanking him backwards. "You can't! You can't! Hermione â€" someone has to â€" you have to stay and protect Hermione," he moaned quietly. "I'll go," he announced, loudly enough to be heard. "I'll go, just, leave Ron alone," he said, quickly shifting away from his friend as he tried to grab at him, Percy already down the stairs and catching his youngest brother before he could do something to _really_ get in trouble.

"What â€" wait â€" Harry no! This isn't _fair_! He can't _do_ this! Surely there are laws or something!" Ron protested as Harry shuffled over to McGonagall and Fudge.

"I _am_ the Law, Mister Weasley," Minister Fudge bit out severely, "and after this display, you should be thankful that I don't dismiss your father on the basis of your rebellious behaviour."

Ron went white then red with anger and fear, mouth fastening shut so hard his lips vanished while Percy looked like all his dreams and aspirations for the future had just shattered down around his ears. Whatever everyone else's facial expressions were, Fudge seemed to realise he had gone a step too far in a much too public location, he blanched a little and drew himself up, gesturing impatiently for Harry to hurry up out of the room and treating Professor McGonagall to a particularly sour look. She observed her lions for a moment before nodding her head (was that almost a smile?).

"Return to your dormitories, I will address this incident in the morning. Come along, Potter," she told them before her tone gentled considerably as she guided Harry out of the room.

He looked over his shoulder as he left, and Ron felt as if someone had clawed his stomach out when he realised Harry's cheeks were wet.

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Whether it was because he was secretly enjoying it, or he was taking out his annoyance and frustration with both Ron and Professor Dumbledore's attitudes towards his decision, but Minister Fudge seemed to take a malicious amount of satisfaction out of bringing Harry's loyal holly wand down over his knee, the loud crack tearing through the room almost like Harry fancied a gunshot would sound like. The broken hilt and shaft were unceremoniously slapped into his open palms as Harry stared down at them mutely, as he heard the Minister saying something to Professor McGonagall, whether he left then Harry didn't know because it was then that it all came crashing down on him.

He gripped his wand to his chest and crouched down, curling himself over it silently.

He had learned years ago to keep his grief quiet, to cry without making a sound. He had not yet fallen out of practice enough to let even the wail that clawed like a thing _alive_ up his throat out. He gritted his teeth and silenced his snivelling even as his nose began to run and his eyes continued to burn and stream like a pair of taps

not completely turned shut.

He could feel Professor McGonagall kneeling on the ground next to him, her thin but strong arms wrapping around him tightly, smelling of ink and parchment, lavender, and gingerbread. She stroked his head and didn't bother with useless empty platitudes as she let him cry himself out. She just held him until he could pull himself together.

"Come on Harry," she said gently, pulling back and leaving a chill where she had once been, "Your belongings will have been collected from the tower by now. We'll say goodbye to your friends, get some breakfast into you, then I'll... I will take you home," she explained, her voice wobbling ever so slightly.

Harry choked on a fresh well of tears, "This was my home," he croaked miserably, gripping his broken wand as if his hands were glued to it.

Her hands were gentle as she urged him off the floor, she didn't hurry him through the corridors as he plodded along slowly, pausing every now and again to absorb his surroundings, trying to engrave them in his memories before the beautiful dream of the last year and a half truly did fade and die completely. Minerva couldn't remember the last time Hogwarts had expelled a student, she knew there were at least two incidents after Hagrid had been dismissed, but she couldn't recall when. Both reasons for such an expulsion were warranted though, nothing no where near as frivolous, pointless, or malicious as simply possessing a frowned upon blood-borne talent. She seethed quietly in the recesses of her mind as somehow even Peeves sensed the sombre mood and paused long enough and quietly enough for Harry to say his goodbyes to the often disagreeable mischief maker.

Expelled for being a Parselmouth. She doubted it. She highly doubted it. Most people forgot, what with his constant hanging on the Floo for Albus' advise, what a manipulative cunning little bastard Cornelius Fudge could be. Oh, he was arrogant, stubborn, and both spineless and overly proud in equal and unhelpful measures, but he was no fool, no idiot, and he had the ability to think in the long term, to gain flashes of brilliance and insight decades before they would be useful. It was how he became Minister for Magic, how he gained the right to campaign to begin with. He started his political career early, barely half a decade out of Hogwarts, those early decisions, that brief flash of insight, took him to the top during his lack-lustre campaign that was only half-heartedly funded by his wife's widower of a father.

If he hadn't expelled Harry Potter as an attempt to curb a future threat to his political career, she would kiss Argus Filch full on the mouth!

Really! By the time Harry was in any position politically or even physically to campaign as Minister for Magic, Fudge would have retired or moved into the Wizengmot and thus been unable to even hold his office. It was, after all, illegal to be Minister and retain a seat.

She wasn't surprised to find most of Gryffindor House awake and waiting by the time they returned, it seemed as though Young Mister

Weasley had given them all the complete run down of what had occurred and why " though how he knew she only had the vaguest of ideas. He had claimed to be present when the Minister arrested Hagrid, but the man himself had blustered about how he had seen neither hide nor hair of Mister Weasley or Potter within Hagrid's abode otherwise he would have handled Mister Potter's expulsion then and there and saved himself the harassment and disrespect of the youngest Weasley 'brat'.

She held a hand up to silence her Lions before they even began, "Stop. Mister Potter, Mister Weasley, all those relevant, take your goodbyes to the dormitories while I speak to the rest of your house," she commanded, gently giving Harry's shoulder a small squeeze as he nodded, subdued but now dry eyed as he quickly moved to Young Mister Weasley's side and took his hand, pulling the scowling red head up the stairs to their dormitory. All of his yearmates, the Weasley Twins, Mister Percy Weasley, and the Gryffindor Quidditch team scrambling after him, anyone else was barred by a fierce Lee Jordan telling them to butt their ugly noses out as what happened up there was none of their business!

"No doubt Mister Weasley has informed you of what has occurred. But just to confirm, the Ministry of Magic has seen fit to step in on the Chamber of Secrets incident. The board of governors has decided to suspend the Headmaster regarding the current attacks due to lack of confidence. As a result, there was no one in a position of authority to argue the Minister's decisions regarding the school. Hagrid, whom I am sure many of you know and are fond of, was previously connected to the Chamber incident fifty years ago, a Prefect caught him raising an unknown magical creature in a cupboard and reported him. At the time, the common belief was that the creature had escaped containment and attacked the student populace and an unscrupulous supremacist took advantage of the situation to create panic. Never the less, Hagrid was expelled at the time. The Ministry decided that in order to handle the current incident, all individuals connected would be dealt with. As such, even though he possesses both mine and Headmaster Dumbledore's complete trust and confidence, Hagrid has been arrested and consigned to Azkaban Prison for the foreseeable future " "

"But Professor!" a sixth year piped up frowned, "Surely he got a trial? Right? They can't just decide he's guilty and throw him in without proof!"

"Unfortunately, Miss Dunvegan, the Minister for Magic can. During times of civil unrest he can move with autonomy outside the norm, originally it was so that the Minister could sign emergency laws into practice, and work for the betterment of Magical Britain should he ever feel his office was compromised in any way. With spells like Imperio, various compulsions, and even potions, it was a very real concern during times of war. However, due to administrative errors during You-Know-Who's last rise, the unrest, the sudden disappearance, and the political backlash from many prominent Pureblood families suddenly returning to their senses meant that the emergency procedures were never written off. Legally and Officially, England is still in a period of civil unrest, thus giving the Minister complete control outside the bounds of the law over the population.

"As such, on top of arresting Hagrid without trial, Mister Potter has

also been expelled from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry on the grounds of his Parselmouth abilities," she finally detailed with a heavy sigh. She expected the room to explode into protests, into shouting, confusion. The heavy silence was worse. It prompted her to explain further, she shouldn't open her mouth, but her lions deserved to know why one of their own was being persecuted, being thrown out, exiled. "Slytherin's monster is currently believed to be a serpent of some description. Mister Potter's parselmouth talents have brought a concern to the Ministry that he is perhaps the one controlling the monster. However, as Mister Weasley so effectively pointed out earlier, until the Duelling Club, Mister Potter was unaware he was even speaking another language, on top of his own less than pure lineage and continued association with Miss Granger, it is ludicrous to even consider him as the Heir of Slytherin. He is a Gryffindor. And whether or not he calls this castle home, he always will be," she declared strongly, glaring down the length of her nose at her lions as she drew herself up strongly.

Nods and calls of agreement went up amongst the students as looks were exchanged.

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The goodbyes between Mister Potter, his friends, and team did not take long. It was trying to pry Young Mister Weasley away from him that took the bulk of the pre-dawn hours, talking him out of leaving Hogwarts with him in a show of solidarity, of attacking the Minister in revenge. But Harry vetoed them, reminding him that someone had to stay and take care of Hermione, protect her; he would make it, he would manage. He'd been planning his escape from the Dursleys for years, it would be more difficult now that he had two years of muggle schooling to catch up on, but he had motivation now, and it wasn't like he was attending the same private school as Dudley, so he didn't have to keep his scores lower than his idiot cousin. He would survive.

It broke her heart to chivvy him out of the tower, young Percy having to hold his little brother back and stop him from chasing after them as she took Harry away. Deciding to avoid the Great Hall, and no doubt the heckling of Slytherin House who were probably already aware of Mister Potter's expulsion thanks to that little albino toad Malfoy, she took him into the kitchens for breakfast.

He had clearly seen a House Elf before, though where she couldn't think of unless he caught sight of one of their own for whatever reason, so he didn't ask what they were as they were sat down and served a swift breakfast. They ate in silence, Harry too despondent to do anything more than nibble on his raspberry jam toast, and Minerva with her heart quietly breaking even further, unable to muster her house's famous courage to break the silence.

If Harry drew out his breakfast far longer than she knew he usually took, she didn't comment. Merely poured herself another tea and waited him out. Were it any other student she probably would have snapped at them to hurry it up, but she wasn't heartless. And this whole situation was wrong no matter which way one looked at it.

So she let him take his time, she let him gather himself, and when he was ready, they bade the kitchens behind and went to the small side-chamber next to the Great Hall, the same one that he had stood

in over a year ago waiting to be Sorted. His trunk was waiting, along with Hedwig and her cage, the snowy owl hooting almost in askance as they came in.

Minerva closed the door behind them and knelt in front of the twelve year old, gripping his shoulders gently. He was so young, and small. James had never been this tiny, neither had Lily, not even in their First Years. Lily had actually been the taller of the two until they reached Fourth Year and the Gryffindor Boys all seemingly obtained their growth spurts at the same time, returning to school with an extra six inches of height to her two. Severus had come close when in his first year, but even then he was a little taller, more filled out. Minerva had worried when young Harry stepped through those doors. She knew neglect when she saw it, and it was stamped on every inch of the poor child, the way he looked at others, the way he shied from attention both from the students and the teachers, his treatment of food, the people around him.

"We will be taking something called a Portkey back to Privet Drive. It will be a bit of a bumpy ride just to warn you. I will explain the situation to your relatives, and... lay down some ground rules for them. I know your home-life isn't as happy as you allow others to believe, but I will not allow you to come to harm, Harry. I will check on you as often as I can. No matter what, you're still one of my lion cubs," she explained softly and earnestly, as firmly as she could hoping that the tightness of her hold on his shoulders would convey her honesty.

Harry's smile was a shadow, a little wobbly, and gone like the wind. He didn't think he would ever be able to smile again.

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****Originally I wanted to cut after Lucius and co left Hagrid's hut and jump to Privet Drive with Harry looking back on these scenes retroactively. Not as a flashback because I hate them, but just in summary. But Reighost insisted that we have the wand snapping scene, and then Ron happened and Minerva, so we now have this. Made inbetween trying to build Niflheim on Minecraft and getting lost down abandoned mining shafts. ****

****But still, hope you guys enjoy this. There will be a lot of OCs, just to warn you, and I will have pictures and what not of them on my facebook page along with the Minecraft map of the school when I finish it. So far I'm still on the first floor and fighting with the left wing dormitories and headmistress's office. Yeah, I made myself an Author page on facebook since my account got suspended, I made a new one but put my writing on a Page and kept my account private so check it out. I'll have regular status updates on there. ****

Just to warn you as well, I plan on taking this above and beyond Voldemort, there will be repercussions to this, and I'll be playing with a lot of aspects from those minor crossovers and bringing them into this fic. Hope you enjoy it and give me some feedback.

2. Chapter 2

****NIFLHEIM ACADEMY****

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****Summary:**** "The Ministry must be seen to do something", and with that, Harry Potter's wand is snapped. Expelled in his second year, he is invited to a new school famous for being the home of one of the Eight Great Repositories of Knowledge. But with Voldemort alive and the Chamber of Secrets still open, he will need every resource his new school possesses to stay alive in the coming years.

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****CHAPTER TWO****_

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Almost a week after his return, Harry fancied that if it hadn't been for the very menacing lecture Professor McGonagall gave both his Aunt and Uncle regarding how to care for a child, and the dire consequences she would enforce if they did not do so to her satisfaction, he was fairly certain that his life would have been a great deal worse under their roof. For one, the fact that she even followed through on her promise to check up on him only three days after she originally dropped him off, interrupting a dinner that Harry had not been invited to as he lay forlornly in his bedroom and wallowed in depression, only reinforced the fact that their behaviour was going to be policed.

For now, Vernon was toeing the line and on his 'best' behaviour (best behaviour towards Harry involved ignoring his existence outside of making sure there was enough food to feed him as well as himself and his wife in the fridge). Though, that could also be because the Professor made a point of turning the sofa into a newt and coolly informed him that as a Transfiguration Mistress such a thing was child's play, but even easier for her to do the same to a human. After all, humans had more in common with an amphibian than a sofa. Vernon had gone almost translucent with mute terror at the not so subtle threat, his head nodding so vigorously it was a wonder it didn't come off.

The memory of that confrontation was probably the only reason the former Gryffindor didn't spend the whole week crying into his pillow, unable to be consoled "not that anyone in this house would have tried.

Hogwarts was still a raw, ragged wound in his chest. One that showed no indication towards healing just yet, or any time soon. He couldn't even hold onto the half-thought up bitter daydream of becoming

Hagrid's assistant at Hogwarts if he was to ever be expelled, trailing after him and carrying his heavy bags and crossbow while Ron and Hermione continued on to become amazing sorcerers. Without him. But that daydream had gone up in flames before he even considered it a possibility in his current situation, Hagrid had been arrested and escorted off the school grounds before Harry had even gotten back up to Gryffindor Tower.

He didn't even understand what they meant by expulsion from magic school. Why would they snap his wand? It didn't belong to the Ministry, or the school. It was private property, they shouldn't have been able to destroy it like that. Having heard enough of Vernon's rants on the subject about how a man's possessions and home shouldn't be interfered with by the Government, he was well acquainted with the knowledge that Minister Fudge's actions would have never been allowed in the Muggle World. But in the magical one... was there some law preventing him from buying another wand? Ollivander had mentioned that his parents had been in to buy their 'first' wands, did that mean they had more than one? What about his schooling? Was there some kind of law preventing Harry from attending a different school of magic? In the muggle world, if a student was expelled from one school, they just had to attend a different one as it was illegal for children under a certain age to be without a decent education. They could be homeschooled, but Harry didn't know if that was allowed for magical children. And who would he get to tutor him? And again, was he allowed to buy a second wand in order to get those lessons?

What about potions? Or Herbology, Astronomy, Divination, Care of Magical Creatures " was he barred from them as well? Or could he continue learning those subjects and using his magic with them as long as he didn't have a wand?

Had he been exiled completely from the Magical World?

Was he allowed into Diagon Alley anymore? Hagrid was allowed to come and go, but he had a job in the Magical World, a legitimate reason to continue living alongside them. What about his Vaults and money? Could he still access them so he could pay for his schooling elsewhere? (Could he use a second hand wand belonging to one of his parents, or other family members if one was in there? Neville used his dad's wand, and Ron used... Harry couldn't remember whose wand it was, Charlie's? Or one of his Great Uncle's? At least until it snapped, it worked fine for him.)

He didn't know. Maybe he should ask Professor McGonagall? He should write a list of questions to ask her, so he didn't forget.

Peeling himself out of his bedding where he had been wallowing, he dragged a sheet of parchment over and inked a quill. Perhaps it was a bit masochistic of him to continue using such things when he didn't really have to, but it felt like... it felt like giving up if he didn't. And no matter what anyone actually said about him, no one could claim he was a quitter. In fact, they would say he was more like a dog with a bone, once he got an idea into his head it was nigh impossible to pry it out, and he would end up pursuing it to the ends of the earth. Or down dangerous trapdoors beneath narcoleptic Cerberi.

The most important questions went down first: Was he exiled entirely from the Magical World? Could he buy another wand, was it against the

Law? Would he be allowed to attend a different magic school? Why did Fudge snap his wand when it was private property? Was he barred from Gringotts? Etc, etc.

It was just as he was writing his final question (Am I still allowed to brew potions outside of Hogwarts?) when he heard a tapping at his window sill.

Even though it was February and freezing cold, he kept it open at all times so that Hedwig could come and go, just in case he received a Ministry letter saying he could come back to Hogwarts, or a note from Ron telling him Hermione was awake and okay. Any normal owl would just fly through and land on his desk rather than wait politely on the window sill.

When he turned, he realised just why.

It wasn't an owl.

He wasn't even sure what kind of bird it was, or whether it was a bird at all. Well, obviously it was a bird, but he didn't know if it were an actual living creature.

It looked like a mix between a kestrel and a secretary bird, about a foot tall it was white and glowing, seemingly made of captured starlight, or glowing white mist. Harry had never seen anything like it. It stared at him motionlessly. Too motionlessly actually, Harry decided, feeling uncomfortable. No living thing was ever that still. Was it even breathing?

Warily, he got to his feet and approached it. As he got closer, he realised that he could see through it a little. It really wasn't a living creature. Then he noticed that the... he wasn't sure, it looked like mist or steam, but it was filled with tiny glowing runes. So that was why it looked like starlight, every individual rune was glowing white and drifting lazily throughout the bird.

Warily, he held a hand out for it so he could take it to Hedwig's perch. Delicately, the magic bird stepped onto his hand, and then shattered.

The runes seemingly just falling away like glitter or rain, the delicate bird crumbling on his hand with runes cascading to the floor where they faded out of existence, leaving a small wooden scroll in his palm.

Harry gaped in astonishment, his room oddly dull and dark now without the ethereal light cast by the magical bird.

Was it some kind of messenger bird made of magic?

He looked down at the scroll, it was small with double cylinders tied together with a dark red ribbon. The wooden handles looked almost like sword hilts and possessed etchings of flowers and swirls, tiny chips of moonstone set in the tips of the handles. It was very pretty, only about six or seven inches long, and the paper was a very pale ivory coloured parchment that was much finer than anything he had ever found in Scibbulus Writing Instruments.

Who on _earth_ would be writing him on such fancy paper, let alone using such a unique, if beautiful, method of delivery?

Warily, he pulled the ribbon off and set it on his desk, unrolling both sides of the school to look at the message within. At the top of the page there were delicate decorative illustrated borders of magic-like swirls done in golden ink, and delicate five-petal star-like flowers in rubies, emerald, and sapphire colours. He'd seen designs like that on Mrs Number Eight's exotic tea sets from the far east, he couldn't remember if it was Turkish or somewhere else, but they had been very beautiful, even if Aunt Petunia had been thoroughly disapproving of something so foreign being served in a British Household.

In elegant black script beneath a small coat of arms depicting a staff crossed with a hammer across a book bearing one of those star-shaped five petal flowers was something that made Harry's heart stutter in his chest.

NIFLHEIM ACADEMY OF MAGICAL PRACTICES

Headmistress: Catherine Winter

Deputy Headmistress: Artemis Riveths

_Dear Mr Potter, _

_ Niflheim Academy is pleased to inform you that as of __February the 15th you have reached the required
>magical standards to begin an education within our academy, should you so desire to join us. As such, we at Niflheim
Academy of Magical Practices would like to invite you to one of our Open Days this spring. _

_ Included with this letter is our standard Student Prospectus, a brochure regarding the grounds, and further
>information leaflets detailing how to reach us, and, should you wish, how to accept or decline our invitation.

_ We hope to see you at our Open Day._

_Kind regards, _

_Artemis Riveths
>Deputy Headmistress

He had been invited to a new school.

Numbly, he reread the letter with increasing near-hysteria. He had been accepted into a _new school_!

Eagerly he unrolled the scroll even further, collecting the small handful of papers that slipped out and the thin paperback book with them. One of the leaflets showed a white and blue-green coloured castle perched atop a glacier somewhere cold and white, smothered in snow, with high spires and blue roofs, a jutting fang of rock stretching out from the glacier just beneath the school almost like a muggle battle-ship's flight deck. Other pictures inside showed students in thick fur-lined parkas on dog sleds, or riding reindeer or other clearly magical creatures Harry had never seen before. The

uniforms were all black and red, and he goggled to see a _centaur_ wearing a very modified version of one to fit his form, it seemed as though the school was not _just_ for human magic users. Now that he was paying better attention, he saw a girl with golden skin and four arms in the background of one picture, next to her was a goblin wearing the school uniform, they were laughing along happily with an almost _dragon_-looking girl that had wings and horns and even a snub-nosed snout.

He eagerly read through the text of the leaflet, boasting of the school's diverse multi-racial nature, their facilities catering to all unique peoples and circumstances, quotes from students in the past about how the school helped them interspaced throughout the text. A centaur girl explaining how she damaged her spine and couldn't use her backlegs, no magic could help with her injuries, so the school provided her with a specialised wheelchair and enchantments on the stairs that allowed her to attend all of her classes without any problems. A deaf student who gushed about how the teachers set him up with a magically modified muggle voice to text computer that would write all of the teacher's lectures down for him.

It was a safe facility built around one of the Eight Great Repositories of Knowledge, a legendary library built in time-unknown before humanity were even scrabbling out the mud on all fours, with every scrap of information ever discovered impartially recorded by a dedicated enclave of the ancestors of present day House Elves and magically created 'Sendings' â€" whatever they were â€" and constantly updated every year with knowledge both magical, muggle, human, and non-human. The leaflet didn't explain what a Sending was, but apparently they were the primary record keepers with the 'House Elves' going out and collecting the information and books. Beholden to absolutely no Government or Ministry, the school operated with international impunity, a true neutral zone in thanks to ancient Nordic treatise and geas that were _still_ going strong even today. With the school wards linked into the Repository as well, there was absolutely _no chance_ of the school being attacked, breached, or discovered by unwelcome parties, governments, armies, or muggles. It would take erasing the entirety of Svalbard off the world map to bring the wards down, and even then, the Repository extended deep below sea-level and down past even the ocean floor. Chances are it would survive no matter what. It had already outlasted several species, the sinking of Atlantis (according to the flyer, Svalbard had once actually _BEEN_ Atlantis. Sunk in a catastrophic backlash of magic, the Repository survived, and over the years, possibly with outside help, no one was quite certain and the records had yet to be unearthed from the Repository's lower levels, the land resurfaced, sans ruins, in time for the Norse to stumble upon it and 'discover' the land mass they dubbed 'Niflheim' after their religious beliefs; hence why the Headmistress chose the name of the school, apparently it was something of an inside joke), the extinction of the dinosaurs, multiple near-world destroying incidents, and just about every single large scale magical war waged to claim it by magical civilisations of the Northern Hemisphere, and a few even from the Southern (unfortunately the African Mages froze to death before they could truly begin their own campaign, they had not been prepared for Svalbard's bitter winters when they finally made shore. Warming charms, or the ancient equivalent, just were not going to cut it).

Hermione would have given her left leg to attend a place like this, Harry decided, a little choked up at the reminder of his friend as he looked up another leaflet, this time boasting about the school building, grounds, classes, and teachers.

Apparently, Niflheim accepted any student, regardless of nationality, gender, and species. Schooling could begin whenever, no matter what the age, as long as the prospective student had reached a particular level of magical strength. After that, they would have until the year of their twentieth birthday to take their final examinations in their chosen fields, and graduate from the school. Scholars could petition to have access to the Repository and board within a special wing of the school, but they had to have permission, and were often heavily encouraged to help the students with their own learning. Many a scholar of obscure magic had actually found promising apprentices amongst the students during their tenures within the Repository. Detentions were not the simple mind-numbing writing of lines, but rather educational punishments to better teach students how to care for themselves upon graduation, helping in the kitchens, laundry, classroom and toilet cleaning, maintaining the grounds, mucking out the animal pens, amongst other things. They possessed many and varied excellent student clubs and committees, the Flying Club and the Library Exploration Committee being the most popular, with Technomancy coming in a very close second.

There were six mandatory classes for first years, of which only Mind Magics had to be taken for a single year but continued further if desired. Runo " the discipline of using Spirits or Outer Magic of the world around them; Music " Niflheim Academy was world famous for producing the greatest masters of Musically based magic, tying it into several different magical disciplines on top of using it as a branch of magic in its own right; Potions " a fairly nondescript class but in recent years the school's Potions classes had been gaining wide recognition for its rapid improvement under the master Alchemist Roger Bacon; History " with the Repository at their fingertips, it was to absolutely no one's surprise that the History course of Niflheim could not be beaten by any other known educational establishment; and lastly, Galdrastafur " Runic magic, another course in which they dominated most other schools the world over with only the Chinese and Egyptains beating them out, if only for flexibility.

Other courses were Battle Magic, Physical Defence (something else that had been gaining recognition for the school), Arithmancy, Enchantments, Astronomy/Astrology, Elements (a class dedicated to wielding elemental magic without a foci), Herbology/Botany, Care of Magical Creatures, Languages (of which they offered over two hundred both magical and muggle), Talismen and Sprites, Healing, Warding, and Divination.

Harry frowned as he looked over the courses. There were no electives for Transfiguration or Charms. Now why was that? They were so essential in terms of magic, they seemed to be everywhere, in every thing, in the magical world. Or the British one, he supposed. Looking at the small synopses of each class, he guessed Enchantments was something akin to Charms, but he couldn't see anything like Transfiguration. He would just have to study that in his own time then, given how it was something his father had excelled at, and Professor McGonagall taught, he didn't want to let them down by not learning as much as he could.

He skimmed through the student prospectus (printed on magazine quality muggle paper instead of parchment) which told him pretty much the same information as the leaflets did, but also possessed tiny profiles on each of the teachers, and detailed various famous alumni. When he came to the bio of the Potions teacher he felt his mouth open and his stomach drop down to his toes.

****Roger Bacon, also known throughout Europe as Nicholas Flamel****

The Potions Professor at Niflheim was Nicholas Flamel? The man he had supposedly killed last year by failing to protect the Philosopher's Stone? But... Dumbledore told him he'd died...

Harry stared at the picture of the odd shrivelled up old man grinning up at him. Unlike with most magical books, and leaflets, none of the papers from the school possessed moving pictures. Nicholas Flamel was apparently a fake name that Roger Bacon had adopted in order to avoid the frantic man-hunts from the Vatican who had attempted to incarcerate him as a heretic some four centuries ago. Apparently, he was still a known quality to them and it was only in the last century that they had relaxed their frothing 'heresy' bile to not try to kill him. He was noted to be an old friend of the Hyuga teachers, an elderly woman with snow white hair and a kind smile, and a young man with wild brown hair and eerie amber-red eyes that did not look human in the slightest. Apparently they were married. Harry eyed the pictures with some trepidation. Such an old lady and a young man? That was... creepy. Though, he supposed the young man could be one of those non-humans that didn't age like other people did. He could be even older than she was, he didn't know. Their ages weren't listed. But it did say that he was a long term friend to Roger Bacon.

He could see other non-humans amongst the staff pictures as well, the Deputy Headmistress, Miss Artemis Riveths was staggeringly beautiful. Too much so to be human, and she possessed pointed ears, the skin around her temples and cheekbones having the faintest pearlescent shimmer of what looked like fish scales. The Air Elements teacher was a woman with skin so dark it looked like black obsidian, and pupil-less golden yellow eyes. The Divination teacher was one of those dragon-looking people, while the History teacher was a rather young looking Dwarf with a thick golden beard and violently blue runic tattoos patterning every inch of visible skin.

At the back of the prospectus were a number of parchment pages, it explained that the following pages had a list of dates and times for potential Open Days and that if he wished to attend one, he need only cross the date he wished to attend out, every parchment was linked and the choices of other prospective students would be visible thus allowing for no double booking. The final page was a form that upon being filled out and torn from the book would automatically turn into a 'Messenger Sending' and return to the school with his decision.

Laying the prospectus down he quickly grabbed his quill and checked the list of dates and times. The earliest was next week on the twenty fourth, and it hadn't yet been crossed through like the twenty third or the twenty sixth. He quickly drew a thick black line through the date and breathed a sigh of relief when it sank neatly into the paper and a flicker of runes lit up along the border of the page. Turning the page, he eyed the form. It looked fairly standard, asking for

his name, date of birth, former school, current residence, though it did ask for his currently registered hospital or doctors office. There was also an extra little bit asking if he had any particular special needs.

Harry filled it in slowly, putting a small note beside the hospital question saying that he didn't know and had never actually been to one in memory, but the school nurse at Hogwarts would probably have some kind of record for him. In the special needs box though... He debated whether or not to write what he wanted to say before sighing and deciding to take the risk. He would never get anywhere without saying it.

"_My wand was snapped, I don't know if I'm allowed another one as I was expelled._" He considered telling them that Voldemort was alive, and probably plotting to kill him, but figured he should probably tell them in person and explain what happened properly and send them in Dumbledore's direction to confirm it. Hell, even Nichola- Roger Bacon's as it had been _his_ stone Harry nearly died for.

Signing it off by ticking the box saying he was interested in attending the Open Day, he carefully pulled the parchment out of the prospectus.

Almost immediately it glowed and Harry yanked his hand back. Runes surged up off the page like a leaf storm, swirling up in a tight whirlwind that gradually grew brighter before it glowed blindly bright and settled down to a soft shimmer. Harry squinted open his eyes, having shut them against the radiant blare of light. Stood on his desk was another one of those glowing birds.

It stared at him a moment before bobbing and immediately launching itself off his desk, taking flight out of the open window just as Hedwig swooped in, making the owl shriek in surprise as she backwinged and flailed to avoid a collision. The bird didn't pause and suddenly shot upwards, almost vertically, and was lost amongst the clouds.

Harry stared after it before the uncontrollable grin once again split his face.

He had been accepted into a new school. He _had_ to tell Ron!

**0000**

**Name:** Harry James Potter
>_**Date of Birth:**_ 31 July 1990(1)
>_**Species:**_ Human_

**Former/Current school:** Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry " Gryffindor House
>_**Current Residence:**_ Number 4 Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey, SR11 9HO, United Kingdom
>_**Currently registered Hospital/Doctor's Sugery:**_ I've never been to one that I can remember. But Madam Pomfrey the nurse at Hogwarts has some records._

**Special Requirements** (Wheelchair access, assisted learning, etc): My wand was snapped, I don't know if I'm allowed another one as

I was expelled._

There was a lot you could learn about someone from their handwriting, Headmistress Winter knew. Reading through the paper sent by young Mister Potter she could see his disbelief, desperation, and anxiousness all rolled into the smooth streaks of ink and messy spiky hand writing. She hadn't known he had been expelled from Hogwarts at the time of the letter being sent, though perhaps she should have " there had been an incident with a visiting scholar attempting to gain deeper access to the Repository than was agreed by attempting to seduce one of the Librarians. She had personally escorted the scholar back to his country of origin and filed formal charges against him, thus had not been paying much attention to the international news scene. She would need to correct this.

What remained now was to find out exactly _why_ Mister Potter had been expelled. She would not tolerate a miniature Dark Lord in training within her school, the risk to the Repository was too great, and not to mention their students and staff. If any Dark Lord had the faintest idea of just whom was teaching their Physical Defence and Healing Classes... Never mind the kind of students they attracted. They had royalty attending the school at present!

She reached for her intercom, "Artemis, do you have a moment?" she asked after punching in the appropriate runes that would put her in contact with the Deputy Headmistress.

There was a long moment that Catherine patiently waited out before she heard the other woman's voice, "I believe I can spare twenty minutes at present before needing to check in on our Student Mentors. Shall I come to you?" the woman's almost lyrical voice asked.

"Please do. And if you could, pick up the recent issues of magical newspapers in England and Europe over the last two weeks from the Repository," she requested idly. With Mister Potter's status as a symbol within the United Kingdom it would be to no surprise that his expulsion would have made the papers, perhaps she could glean some manner of knowledge from them before she endeavoured to contact the school herself. If not only to find out, but also to obtain his school records and medical files. Most European newspapers were not worth the rags they were printed on given how deeply tied to their respective Ministries they were, propaganda and cover-ups were frequently run on front pages. So while she wouldn't trust one of those papers any further than she could perhaps throw a mountain without magic, there was always some grain of truth amidst the pigswill. Something she could use to open further conversation with her Hogwarts contemporaries.

Sighing deeply, Catherine waved a hand to the fireplace on the far side of the room, encouraging it to greater heights and heat, allowing the warmth to wash through the room as if sinking into a hot bath. February was dreadfully bitter, and while the school was well designed and generally kept well heated via ancient roman methods of heated floors, plenty of fireplaces, and various runes built into the walls designed to retain heat, the corridors were just always that shade too chilly for comfort at this time of year. Enough to prompt even her to don a sweater outside her rooms.

Someone knocked on the door and it was the work of a mere thought for

it to swing open, admitting a stunningly beautiful woman inside.

Artemis Riveths was possibly almost as old as Catherine herself, maybe even older, both women were not exactly the chatty types when it came to their personal history, and their friendship was a simple warm thing that required no deep secrets or confessions of the past. Catherine herself was considerably older than most would assume at first glance, her features were ageless while being mature, snow white hair she kept braided back, and flint-grey eyes, her face was lined and dignified with a beak-like nose and high cheekbones. She favoured simple clothing of tunics and trousers, thick comfortable boots, and multiple layers. She would not have looked out of place in a history book about the Vikings.

Opposite her, Artemis couldn't have been more different. The Finnish/Greek woman was half-Veela half-Water Nymph, her hair was a silvery butter-like blonde that tumbled down her back in loose waves and curls, her skin a pale peach white with the faintest shimmer of pearly scales framing her face and mother-of-pearl coloured eyes. Her clothing tastes were elegant and almost ethereal, making her look like a woman out of time in the soft silvery dove-grey gown she wore. Under her arm were the papers Catherine requested.

"I take it Mister Potter has replied to his Open Day invitation?" Artemis questioned as she approached, dress swishing faintly against the stone floors, the faintest peek of white slippers seem under the hem.

Catherine nodded to her oldest friend, "Indeed. He has confessed to his expulsion and I find myself at a loss of how to proceed without knowing more. I was too busy handling our latest debacle to pay much attention to the papers this week," she admitted solemnly as Artemis set the papers down on her expansive desk and conjured a chair made of ice to sit on. Well used to the Deputy Headmistress's antics, Catherine ignored it and suppressed her grimace. It was cold enough in here, she did not need to summon any more ice into the room.

"Allow me to save you the headache of wading through that tripe then," the blonde offered as she began to sift through the papers, "It seems as though Mister Potter's expulsion and the reasons for it were a tad too public for the British Minister to silence. The students of Hogwarts have contacted an independent newspaper, often accused of being little more than a conspiracy tabloid, and provided Penseive memories as well as interviews. You are familiar with the Quibbler, yes?" she asked, presenting the chosen newspaper to her friend.

Catherine nodded as she took it and laid it across her desk, scanning the headlines, "Of course. I followed Diana Lovegood's potions column quite enthusiastically. Her accident was truly a tragedy," the Headmistress lamented as she scanned through the paper and nodded, "Xenophilius seems to have lost more of himself to his First Sight, I should have pushed his father a little more firmly about bringing him in for training. First Sight is not something you leave untrained or attended," she sighed.

Artemis made no sound of agreement or disagreement, they both knew her thoughts on those parents who refused their childrens'

opportunity to attend for asinine reasons such as 'family tradition'.

The white haired woman set the paper down with a sigh once she was finished, "A delicate situation it seems," she observed before humming thoughtfully, "But it changes little," she decided before reaching for a clean sheet of paper and beginning to write. "Artemis, I would like for you to be in charge of Mister Potter's visitation. It is likely that he will opt to attend no matter what, but I would like for him to believe it is the best option, not merely his last option. If you can, see if you cannot convince his current Guardians to sign over their rights, with the British Ministry's behaviour it would most likely be safer for Mister Potter if he were completely removed from them," she explained with a dark frown. If there was one thing she abhorred more than anything else in the world, it was child abuse. That a Government was the one perpetrating it meant nothing, she had erased Governments before in her more wild days, she had no fear of those deluded insects. She would remove any child from an abusive situation and place them under her care if she found out about their poor circumstances. At present she already had twelve children under her personal care, several of whom were the younger siblings of students currently in attendance who had not yet met the power requirements to become students themselves.

Artemis nodded, climbing to her feet and gathering the newspapers in order to be returned, "I shall do my utmost," she promised and made a mental note to review the Student Mentors in their meeting later for the one best suited towards Mister Potter. Given his age, his student mentor would need to be much more hands on, and carefully picked. Niflheim had never had a student as young as him before, that would likely breed resentment amongst the other students, so she had best pick carefully.

**0000**

And another Chapter done!

Next chapter should see Harry's Open Day and the introduction of more Ocs, his student mentor, and a bit of exploration of the grounds and school. Fun times.

**(1) **Harry's birthdate: I bumped it up a decade to better make use of pop-culture and technological advancements in the 2000's as I remember very little of the 90's.

3. Chapter 3

NIFLHEIM ACADEMY

**0000**

Summary: "The Ministry must be seen to do something", and with that, Harry Potter's wand is snapped. Expelled in his second year, he is invited to a new school famous for being the home of one of the Eight Great Repositories of Knowledge. But with Voldemort alive and the Chamber of Secrets still open, he will need every resource his new school possesses to stay alive in the coming years.

****Warnings:**** Slash, fem-slash, het, character death, Canon-mangling, torture, politics, a BUTTLOAD of Original Characters, Original magic, ****minor crossovers with:** Abhorsen trilogy, Mahou Sensei Negima, Avatar the Last Airbender, One Piece, Fairy Tail, Shadow Hearts, and Monster Hunter.******

I do not own Harry Potter, Abhorsen, Mahou Sensei Negima, Avatar, One Piece, Fairy Tail, Shadow Hearts, or Monster Hunter. I'm just playing with them.

**0000**

****CHAPTER THREE****_
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**0000**

What a depressingly _dull_ little neighbourhood.

Artemis sniffed delicately as she stalked down the filthy pavement towards their new prospective student's home. She knew full damn well she was turning heads so hard that one or two possibly would suffer neck problems, and more than a few would have marriage problems, but that was hardly her concern. No, her only concern was the little boy on the second floor whose magic was rippling out to her like the broken surface of a puddle disturbed by a frightened tadpole. By nature, Veela were somewhat empathetic, combine that with the years of dedicated study into Mind Magics, Artemis had the best developed empath abilities that she had ever encountered outside of a Key, or a Noram â€" a natural born empath that was more spirit than human.

Outwardly, with its neatly maintained frost-bitten flowerbeds, damp and muddy lawn, and frost limed driveway, the house was just as common and plebeian as all of its neighbours. But to those who knew how to look... The paint upon the guttering gleamed as if new, the seals around the windows were still firm and springy, the door as handsome as it was when first installed, the roof tiles clean of lichen and moss. Magic had made itself home in this place, and protected it in what small ways it could. They were so weak, it was all they could do she realised in faint dismay and scornful disgust.

Protection Wards based around intent and anchored in a blood connection, with the strength of the wards dependent upon mutual intentions and emotionally charged feedback. She refrained from grimacing, but only just. A botched familial protection ward, improperly applied, and only half-executed, left to stagnate without being fully 'unwrapped' as it were.

That, more than anything, told her what kind of mess she was about to step into.

Mister Potter's homelife was not likely to be a pleasant one, and she was going to need a few moments to ensure her emotional control was up to the task of not doing anything that Catherine would be severely displeased with her over.

Under the guise of checking her purse, she delved into her mind magics and spent a few moments fortifying herself as she rummaged a

folder out from her various papers and essentials, ignoring the stares and twitching curtains of the natives. She was probably the most interesting thing to have appeared in this neighbourhood in decades, she decided as she finally straightened up. Though all they could see was her long pale aqua coloured coat and smart heeled boots, underneath that she had opted for a smart skirt-suit, dark iron grey, with an ivory white blouse, black tights, boots, and a silver brooch bearing the school's crest, a wand crossed with a familiar Dwarven made one-handed hammer. Her long hair neatly clipped back, and her face only bearing the faintest of make-up to cover her scales, she had made no other effort to hide her other-worldliness beyond a simple illusion over her ears to blunt their points to something less dramatic, and more easily passed over.

Marching up to the door, she pressed the bell and waited.

The woman who answered had a mess of ward-threads loosely knotted around her in such an unsightly tangle that it was almost offensive to the eye. Like someone's crochet supplies after half the alley-cat population had spent an afternoon playing with it.

"Mrs Dursley?" she asked, instead of commenting on the awful state of her home's protective wards.

The woman's face was sour, as if she had eaten a lemon, skin and all, staring at her, "Yes, may I help you?" she asked politely, eyes flicking up and down her form and finding herself coming up short by comparison. Not for the first time, Artemis mentally cursed her Veela blood, the aura that they possessed could not wholly be suppressed, and it caused difficulties in many social situations with those who had no mind magic abilities or training, non-magicals and those who had no skill in Occlumency, though young children before puberty were safe. Heterosexual women, unless very secure in their relationships, almost to a total became hostile and argumentative for the sake of being argumentative towards her, the same with some homosexual men though it was less frequent. So while her aura was an attractant to heterosexual men, and homosexual women, it was an aggressive repellent to others. With perhaps only those on the asexual and demi spectrum being immune to her mere presence.

"I am Deputy Headmistress Riveths, may I come in and speak with you and your husband?" she asked politely.

Reluctantly, the woman allowed her into the house. Artemis was mildly impressed, the young woman had been raised with impeccable manners to ignore the repelling effects of her aura to such a degree. She showed her where to hang her coat and escorted her to the living room before taking her preference for tea and vanishing into the kitchen to collect her husband and the needed acquaintances.

Vernon Dursley was... shockingly unhealthy to her eyes, especially when compared to her colleagues, especially Teacher Hyuga who taught Physical Defence, or Teacher Vali who taught History. And much more beholden to his baser instincts than his wife, with far less control. Mrs Dursley could do better, the Veela/Nymph decided frostily as the man fell under her sway without even needing to meet her eyes. His face became slack and overly interested in the way of all simpletons, while his eyes became much brighter and almost manic by comparison.

"Miss Riveths, I presume?" he asked, all charm and slime as he swaggered into the room, seemingly ignorant to how his waistline swung with his movements, his moustache quivering with his obvious interest.

"Laerer Riveths," she corrected him, getting to her feet and extending a hand to shake. She did not wish for him to know her personal name, instead, she gave him her title as Teacher in Norwegian, the national language of Svalbard. All students would be expected to learn it, but there were universal translation charms upon the school so that those multinational students needn't worry about communication difficulties until they had complete mastery of the school's native tongue.

"Laerer, lovely name," he praised, taking her hand and turning it over to kiss. She slipped it free before his lips even brushed her hand.

"My title," she corrected gently, "And please, such actions are not acceptable between a married man and a woman not his wife in my culture. I hope you understand," she lied soothingly as she retook her seat, crossing her ankles and leaning against the armchair's side.

"Of course, of course!" Vernon blustered amiably as he took a seat on the sofa, his disapproving and tight-lipped wife sitting next to him, a shade too close to be proper. Insecure with her husband acting in such a manner. She offered the woman the shadow of an apologetic look, and was somewhat gratified to see her at least a little mollified. "What can we do for you, Laerer? I am a national champion at Golf and have numerous boxing medals, if it is of interest?" he boasted, lying through his teeth and drawing looks of stunned confusion and disbelief from his wife.

Artemis smiled tightly, "As I informed your wife, I am Deputy Headmistress of a very select boarding school â€" "

"And you want our Dudley to attend, eh? Well he's at Smeltings right now, a fine school, I founded it myself!" the man continued, another outrageous boast falling from his lips, completely heedless to his wife's shocked call of his name.

Artemis frowned, she had been unaware of another magical child, she dove back into her handbag and began to rummage for papers. But no, there was no record of a Dudley upon the prospective students â€" not even amidst Catherine's adoptees. She frowned, then... they were completely unaware of the situation.

She hummed, eyes flicking towards the door where, yes now she could see him.

"Mister Potter? Could you please join us in the living room?" she called gently, watching him jump from the corner of his eye, yanking his hands away from the bannister bars as if burnt. He floundered from where he had been eavesdropping on the staircase before slowly uncurling himself and creeping down the stairs towards them. She smiled encouragingly at him as he edged his way into the room, looking nervous, his magic roiling with anxiousness and the faintest after taste of hope. "Come child, sit, it seems as though there has been a slight miscommunication," she explained as she gestured him

into the other arm-chair.

Her eyes narrowed when she realised he very carefully skirted out of armsreach from his uncle as he made his way to it, but didn't yet sit, glancing worriedly at his Aunt who, with her expression pinched and now downright hostile, stiffly nodded her head the slightest of millimetres. The child gingerly sat upon the very edge of the seat and now alarms were screaming throughout the Deputy Headmistress's mind.

If the tangle of wards upon Petunia Dursley were a mess, they were nothing compared to the riot that ensnared her nephew.

She opened her empathy for all of a heartbeat, and wished she hadn't almost immediately.

Disgust, revulsion, bitterness, envy, jealousy, hurt, longing, nostalgia, love, hate " Petunia Dursley was a mess of conflicting emotions and pain in regards to her nephew.

Her husband held nothing but revulsion, fear, and loathing for the child sat to her side.

And the boy... her heart quivered within her chest. Wariness, hurt, sadness, confusion, anxiousness, hesitancy, hope, he was almost as tangled in his emotions as his aunt but not nearly so tormented by them.

The mess with the wards became only too clear with that small peek into their abysmal family dynamic. The protections were tied between Mister Potter and Mrs Dursley, the more Mrs Dursley was determined to protect her nephew, the stronger they would be. The wards were barely functioning and had not even fully connected. She had not taken her nephew in willingly, but she took him all the same. And the resentment that bred had not allowed the wards to completely anchor themselves, coupled with the love she felt being bitter and tainted with jealousy and hurt, they were not very strong. They would perhaps protect the house from water damage, premature aging, and interest from thieves or other people, allowing Accidental Magic to go without notice, but they would, in no way, prevent a wizard with nefarious intentions from gaining entry.

That was what the other wards were for. Attached to the failing protection ward, there were wards for invisibility, mail re-direction (if they had attempted to use any other method of communication beyond Messenger Sending, it would have been redirected to locations and persons unknown), and one of the strongest Notice-Me-Nots keyed towards anti-social behaviour that she had ever encountered in Europe outside of Dark Magic areas.

She reached for the cup of tea Mrs Dursley had provided her with and took a deep mouthful to steady herself.

Wards aside, she had a job. One that was now even more important than she had previously considered. Mister Potter had to attend Niflheim, for his own well being, and if not attend, then at least have his Guardianship signed over to Catherine, she would find him a fine school else where if that was his desire but he could not stay in this environment!

"Allow me to start from the top," she began, "I am Artemis Riveths, Deputy Headmistress of Niflheim Academy of Magical Practices," she announced, shrewdly watching Mrs Dursley. Her husband was thoroughly sedated under her aura and would do little more than smile dumbly and lie about his accomplishments in an effort to look good to her, it was a common enough problem that affected individuals without mental shields. The woman went white, then red with anger, her lips vanishing into a thin puckered line, but she seemed to know her limits and where the line was drawn. She didn't speak.

"Last week, we sent Mister Potter our customary invitation to a school Open Day as he had managed to reach the needed magical requirements to attend. He accepted and booked his visitation for today, however, the Headmistress and I were under the impression this was done with your knowledge and acceptance. I apologise for any undue alarm I may have caused you because of this. Rare is the student who takes responsibility for themselves in such a manner," she explained stiffly, icing her temper as she sipped the tea. That the child in question had not even considered speaking to his Guardians about such a decision spoke very poorly as to his circumstances, and his faith in authority figures.

"My Aunt and Uncle... they don't like magic, I didn't want to bother them," Harry justified quietly, fiddling with the fraying hem of what she had at first assumed was a favourite T-shirt given how ratty and worn out it was. Knowing the emotions behind the facade of this family though gave her a different idea as to just where the over-large red T-shirt may have come from, and in what state it reached the child next to her.

She hummed thoughtfully, "There are arrangements set aside for such cases, but I believe they are best discussed at a later time. Your Open Day appointment still stands, Mister Potter, if you are interested â€" "

"Yes! Yes I am! Please!" he interrupted, nearly jumping to his feet with desperation.

She chuckled and waved him down, "Calm child. And please, do not interrupt again. It is considered disrespectful and will earn you a detention should you decide to enrol. Now, I have your interest, undoubtedly. However, the permission of your Guardians is â€" "

"He shan't be going," Mrs Dursley interrupted sharply. "I'll not waste the money on his attending another freak school just to get thrown out! Or have that crack pot old fool come knocking on our door, threatening my Dudders, to demand I take him back in!" she flared, her voice breaking in her anger.

Harry wilted where he was sat, and Artemis drew herself up. "We have provisions for Scholarship loans, you needn't spend a penny, Mrs Dursley. The debts accrued will be the responsibility of Mister Potter, he will either earn student credit to lessen it, or upon reaching a place of employment with a certain pay-bracket begin to pay off his debt in small increments. Much like your Student Finance Loans for university students," she explained primly with narrowed eyes, "And I have no idea whom this 'crack pot old fool' is, but there are steps that can be taken with our legal department to ensure you receive no harassment from those searching for Mister Potter," she promised.

"You'll be able to get rid of me for the year as well, it's a boarding school as well," Mister Potter suddenly pointed out before glancing at her nervously, "And it's in another country too, so... um... I'll be even further away?" he offered, seemingly confused about how to further encourage his Aunt into letting him go.

She took a deep breath and got to her feet, "Would you and your husband like to join us on the tour of our facilities? We will ultimately speak with the Headmistress about Harry's circumstances under your roof, you can certainly bring any issues, questions, or grievances up with her and we will do our best to rectify them," she offered, delicately brushing lint from her skirt.

Petunia was a hair away from refusing, practically swelling in her seat with fury.

"Why not? Sounds like an adventure!" Vernon suddenly exclaimed, climbing to his feet, completely ignorant to the look of utter betrayal on his wife's face. "Why, the last time I went down the Nile River I wrestled crocodiles, they didn't call me the next Steve Irwin for nothing!" he bragged.

Artemis ignored him, "Mister Potter, I do not want you to be under the impression that Niflheim is your only option, there are a great many magical schools the world over. Should you not find Niflheim to your liking, then contacting one of them is well within your rights. Please bare that in mind."

He nodded gingerly, looking uncertain, "Yes ma'am."

She nodded and withdrew a long length of cord from her purse, "The weather in Svalbard at the moment is in the minus twenty range, I would recommend digging out some winter clothing. I will give you a talisman to combat the worst of the cold, but it does work best with something to base itself on," she explained and watched as Vernon Dursley cheerily ushered his wife into the hallway and up the stairs to gather the needed clothing, Mister Potter following quickly behind to his own bedroom where he proceeded to bang around for a while.

Artemis sighed deeply and finished off her tea. This was even more of a mess than she thought it would be.

Their youngest student, and currently their most complicated problem. She sincerely hoped Catherine was having better luck getting hold of his records and the reason for his expulsion out of Hogwarts.

**0000**

"You allowed him to face down a _Cerberus at eleven?!_"

**0000**

Harry was trying very hard not to jitter himself into dropping the apparently magical cord Miss Riveths gave him. Sorry, _Laerer_ Riveths. She had explained when he came stumbling down the stairs in both of his Weasley sweaters, old school robe thrown over them, and

his winter cloak, that the school predominantly spoke Norwegian, as that was the national language of the country the school was based, even though they perhaps only had two students _from_ said country attending, it was respect to the land and a very minor magic in of itself. Never the less, she had requested that he show herself and her colleagues the appropriate respect by addressing them with the title Laerer, which meant Teacher. Even though he wasn't a student yet, they were still masters of their craft and educators who had worked long and hard to gain their positions. He guessed he now knew why Headmaster Dumbledore was constantly correcting him to call Snape 'Professor Snape'.

He had already made his decision to attend the school from what he'd read in the leaflets and the way Laerer Riveths handled the Dursleys, he was determined to, he liked the Deputy Headmistress and what he'd read of the school. He had always been more independent than other kids his age, and it was highlighted in the prospectus that students were assigned a Mentor, an older student, and would largely be left to their own devices and should there be any issues, their Mentor would bring it to the teacher's attention to be handled. Plus, Laerer Riveths had mentioned that she could even arrange it so that he never had to return, or at least that was the gist he was getting from the conversation between the grown-ups earlier. What confused him though was Headmaster Dumbledore threatening Dudley, according to Aunt Petunia. Harry didn't think he would do that, so he assumed it was her overreacting, but... she wasn't one to make things up out of the blue, exaggerate and twist a tiny thing she'd heard, making mountains out of mole-hills, but rarely made anything up herself. She didn't approve of imagination. Had the Headmaster said something that she'd taken the wrong way? She did _that_ quite often.

Aunt Petunia looked pinched and furious as she gingerly accepted the long red cord, wrapped in her finest winter coat, with a thick silky white cashmere sweater underneath, she had pulled a thick fluffy white hat on and her fine white leather gloves on. Vernon was straining at the zip of his american style sheep-wool lined bomber-jacket, wearing sturdy blue jeans and brown work boots that he sometimes pulled on when visiting various worksites to make sure his drills were doing their jobs right. All three of them were wearing a small strip of paper with red runes painted onto them pinned to their left breast, apparently these were the warming talismen.

"This is a Portkey, a method of magical transportation," Riveths explained as she shared part of the cord with Uncle Vernon, "It will feel somewhat unpleasant. We have made improvements on the enchantments compared to the old methods but there is still some residual discomfort. It will feel as if someone has grabbed you by the hip and suddenly pulled you to one side. I would advise tensing your neck and back muscles and closing your eyes, the spinning can be disorientating for first timers. Also, spread your legs and bend your knees as if jumping down from somewhere. This should help you avoid falling over when we land," the teacher explained, her voice adopting an almost lyrical lecturing tone as her features became significantly less animated, but much more relaxed.

Hesitantly the group did as they were told, Petunia having to adjust her grip at the Veela's suggestion before she laid a free hand on top of the cord, the small silver ring and red gem on her middle finger lighting up as she said a word he didn't understand.

Suddenly it felt much like she described it would. Only harsher. Like someone had swung a rubber band against his hip, it picked him up forcefully and hurled him away, pushing him the whole distance before suddenly the ground slammed under his feet, making him stumble and his knees buckle a moment.

But he didn't fall. And the rubber band around his hip was gone.

Then the cold hit him, and he shuddered violently, pulling his cloak around him. Even with the little talisman the temperature was bitter. He peeked his eyes open and stared around him in confusion. Where was the school? They had appeared in a small sheltered alcove under an overhanging cliff, all around them was ice and snow, distantly to Harry's left he could see the ocean filled with ice drifting lazily in the strange grey-blue gloom.

A cold wet nose nudged his hand and Harry squawked in surprise, jerking around and coming eye to eye with a monstrously huge Husky. Vibrant blue eyes, black and white patterned thick fluffy fur, and enough muscle to make Fang look weedy, the animal gave him a doggy grin, tongue lolling to one side happily as it tilted his head at him. Harry smiled a little nervously, it was the size of a horse! He'd never seen a dog so big before.

"G-good dog?" he greeted nervously, edging backwards. The animal huffed in amusement before licking his face, tongue plastering flat to his chin and dragging upwards over his mouth, half his nose, and one of his eyes. Harry groaned in pre-teen disgust before he suddenly found himself being licked again and again in rapid fire, suddenly he was nudged over and fell in the snow, smothered in enthusiastic doggy affection "€" which involved a lot of licking, and cold noses in unwanted places. Distantly he could hear Riveths talking to the Dursleys as he tried to wrestle himself away from the massive dog who was determined to either drown him in saliva or lick his face off.

"At this time of year, we don't get much in the way of sunlight. Likely as not, we will see the sunrise for a few minutes at the horizon when we reach the school before setting again," Laerer Riveths explained as she collected a fur lined coat from a very large sled that had four seats set one behind the other, and had about six other massive dogs reigned to it. The leader of whom was now currently assaulting their newest student prospective.

She smiled a little, "It seems as though Aragorn has taken a liking to you," she observed as Harry finally managed to shove the dog's face away.

He grimaced and wiped at his mouth and nose, "A-Aragorn?" he echoed doubtfully before the dog was suddenly pawing him over onto his stomach.

"He wants you to get up. Laying in the snow like that is bad for little humans. And yes, Laerer Matteson your Care of Magical Creatures teacher, is a very big fan of Mister Tolkien's works. Any animal in the school that she has bought or raised will have a Tolkien inspired name. Niflheim dogs are specifically bred and raised magically to be stronger, faster, more intelligent than their regular husky cousins, it is needed as the Wards around the Repository will

not allow magical travel into the grounds. The rest of our journey must be taken via sled, and strong animals are needed. That Aragorn has taken such a liking towards you says well about your character," she praised as the animal bounded to her side and whined for attention. Smiling she bent down and started fussing him.

Harry climbed to his feet, his front caked in powdered snow that he tried to brush off without much effort, a little pink cheeked with embarrassment instead of cold.

Artemis straightened and flicked her hand at him, banishing the snow from his front and then gestured to the sled, "Everyone in. Mister Dursley at the back, Mrs Dursley in the middle, and Mister Potter in the front please, that way we shouldn't plough into any snow-drifts and become stuck," she explained as she ushered the three of them into position, Aragorn bounding to the front of the other dogs and ducking into his harness, and wiggling through the snow until he got his paws into the right position and then got up while leaning forward, the leather straps sliding neatly into place. The dog behind him trotted forward and pulled on one strap which tightened the whole thing up and Aragorn shook himself before huffing happily.

"I-I don't think - " Petunia began nervously.

"Don't worry Pet, I was a champion dog-sledder in my day! You'll be fine!" Vernon boasted as he heaved himself into the back-seat of the sled, obviously very pleased that he would be closer to Laerer Riveths. Petunia's face pinched as she gave the beautiful woman a look of deepest loathing before following her husband, refusing to let him be alone with the harlot. Harry quickly scrambled into place in front of them, barely able to contain his excitement, he was still shivering a little from cold but it wasn't so bad.

At least he was, until Riveths suddenly dropped a huge furry blanket over him, and tucked him in tightly to the sled, "The trip will be just over an hour, and you're so small, it wouldn't do to have one of our prospective students freeze before he even arrives, or his family," she added, giving Petunia and Vernon similar fur blankets.

As soon as the woman was stood at the back of the sled, she gave the reigns a little flick and called out a word, it definitely wasn't 'Mush', Harry couldn't begin to pronounce it so he assumed it must have been Norwegian. But either way the dogs suddenly threw their weight forward, heads down, shoulders forward and straining.

Slowly the sled began to slide forward on the snow, and the dogs took one laborious step forward, two, three, "You can do it," Harry whispered encouragingly, as the animals panted and grunted as slowly they slid faster, and the dogs moved into a slow trot that gradually became a run.

Harry whooped as the animals finally started running, harnesses jingling as the sled got up to speed. Aragorn barked back at him happily, several of the other dogs joining him happily as they surged on through the snow back home.

He couldn't wait.

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**Okay, I wanted to put the school in this chapter, but Artemis is very thorough, she notices a lot. So I wanted to cover her a bit more in depth. Then puppies happened and before I knew it the page count was at five (my typical Chapter length) and I figured here was a good place to stop. I try not to make my chapters too long because then they're a bit of a labour to chew through, and sometimes people don't have a lot of time. So, a nice medium length chapter, something to get your teeth into, but won't take half an hour to read.
XDDD**

4. Chapter 4

NIFLHEIM ACADEMY

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Summary: "The Ministry must be seen to do something", and with that, Harry Potter's wand is snapped. Expelled in his second year, he is invited to a new school famous for being the home of one of the Eight Great Repositories of Knowledge. But with Voldemort alive and the Chamber of Secrets still open, he will need every resource his new school possesses to stay alive in the coming years.

Warnings: Slash, fem-slash, het, character death, Canon-mangling, torture, politics, a BUTTLOAD of Original Characters, Original magic, **minor crossovers with: Abhorsen trilogy, Mahou Sensei Negima, Avatar the Last Airbender, One Piece, Fairy Tail, Shadow Hearts, and Monster Hunter.**

I do not own Harry Potter, Abhorsen, Mahou Sensei Negima, Avatar, One Piece, Fairy Tail, Shadow Hearts, or Monster Hunter. I'm just playing with them.

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CHAPTER FOUR_
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His cheeks were numb and stinging, whipped raw by the wind as they surged across the frozen snow. Harry was freezing, bundling himself up in the wolf-fur blanket he had been given he still found himself shivering as they ploughed onwards. The horizon steadily lightening up from a forbidding dark grey to a lighter, almost green tinged one.

Then they saw it, in the distance, a jagged gleaming oddity upon the icy blue glacier ahead. White towers capped in blue, trimmed with green and blazing windows that glowed in the frozen predawn gloom of the snowy waste around them.

"HOLD TIGHT WHILE I RAISE THE BRIDGE!" Laerer Riveths called over the wind, dragging Harry's attention away from the barely visible protrusion at the top of the glacier. In front of them was a huge broken expanse of water filled with iceburgs.

Aunt Petunia screamed as they rushed onwards with pause or hesitation straight towards the water. Harry felt her scrambling behind him, one hand clawing at his shoulder as he sank into the sled with rising trepidation. Miss Riveths had said something about a bridge "where" was it?!

The water parted, a huge bulb of ice slicing upwards through the water and then unfurling open like flower petals from a bud to lay flat, forming an open path across the water to the next iceberg. Harry's breath caught in his throat as the dogs galloped fearlessly across it without slipping even the slightest of inches. There was no icy spray of water, just a definite chill and the taste of brine in the air as they shot across the ice flower over what Harry identified as probably part of an ocean.

From iceberg to iceberg, more flowers slit the water and laid flat for them, unerringly taking them closer and closer to the glacier that now stood out stark white against the dark grey sky and foreboding clouds blotting the sunrise. He could see signal lights blazing in some of the towers, and what looked like monstrously huge birds wheeling through the air around it. They veered to the right where a slope rose out of the water, taking them to the top of the glacier. The dogs threw their backs into the run and powered up the icy incline with grunting howls and harsh panting breaths. They were still some miles away from the school proper, but Harry could make out some better details now. There seemed to be three floors to the building itself, towers in each corner at the back of the structure facing out over the edge of the glacier, one atop the gates with a signal fire that mirrored the two towers. The huge birds were in fact planes and other flying things, he could see a few brooms up there, a flying carpet, someone with wings, another riding a winged horse, and a massive owl without a rider in formation with the planes.

The dogs barked happily, running even faster now that they were on the home stretch. The huge gates swung open into the courtyard and the dogs began to slow as they slid into the school.

Harry wished he had about eight more eyes. He was right in thinking there were only three floors, the windows on the ground floor were all frosted so he couldn't see through them, the building itself was white trimmed in shades of green with rich blue roofing. The courtyard was regular grey flagstones swept free of snow but had raised wooden flower beds enchanted to keep warm, rosebushes, trees, orchids, daisies, poppies, even sunflowers and lily of the valley were in full bloom despite the time of year. Unknown trees stretching up as high as the third floor their lower branches strung with paper lanterns and other decorations, and just behind them, up against the walls were various benches, occupied by students in red and black, staring at them as the dogs came to a stop, panting happily.

Slowly climbing off the sled, Harry kept the blanket wrapped around him as he stared up and around in wonder, was the front door framed in gold? He goggled a little in shock but ultimately kind of shrugged in semi-hysterical acceptance. When you had the man who invented the Philosopher's Stone on staff, he guessed gold and precious metals took on a different value when your supply was unlimited. Miss Riveths climbed off the sled and came to the front of their group, Harry turning in slow circles while his aunt and uncle practically cowered under their own blankets. She gave the twelve

year old a small smile when he turned to her, unable to feel the huge awed grin splitting his numb wind chapped face.

"Welcome to Niflheim," she told him.

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The front door was indeed framed in gold and emerald. As they stepped into the entrance hall, Vernon made a sound like a dying mouse as he stared around at the very obvious opulence. White stone floors with a trim of emerald bricks bordering the whole room, the corners decorated with gold. The open doorway to the Great Hall framed in diamond bricks larger than his fist showing a room with an emerald floor, huge stained glass windows overlooking the ocean horizon and lazily drifting iceburgs. The entrance hall itself was fairly open with no second or third floor to them, in fact, there were balconies from the third-floor overlooking the entrance hall, craning his neck, Harry could see students milling around, laughing, there seemed to be some kind of student cafe in the right wing balcony, while the left wing balcony was running some manner of stationary shop. The ground floor was primarily the dormitories and social areas, a short staircase spanning the entire length of the room from the entrance hall led down into those areas; each room was warded so it didn't matter what gender the occupants were, boys and girls shared hallways easily with only separate bathhalls and toilets, boys having their bathhall in the right wing, girls in the left, with toilets for both genders in both wings. In the entrance hall to the right of the Great Hall's doorway was a large flight of stairs leading down to several classrooms, the Repository, and the Flight Deck; to the right of that was the headmistress's office beside it at the small set of stairs leading down to the right wing dormitories. To the left of the Great Hall was another large flight of stairs leading down to the lower levels and a short set of stairs to the left wing dormitories beside that; at the bottom of those stairs was the nurse's office. This was to be Harry's first port of call in their tour of the facilities.

"Due to the fact we do not accept students until they have reached a certain level of magical strength, you are in actual fact, our youngest human student to date. We merely wish to ensure that the accelerated learning programme will not cause your development any problems," Riveths explained smoothly as she escorted them down the stairs, Uncle Vernon purple and tongue-tied as he stared at the metre by metre bricks of emerald that made up the support pillars to the third floor balcony.

The door had a small frosted window and when it opened Harry could smell oranges and mint. Much like the rest of the school that Harry had seen it was done in shades of green and white, multiple neat white and yellow beds and bedside tables lined the wall on his right as they moved further into the room. There were two students present, one fast asleep on a bed close to the fireplace with a girl sat next to them reading a book and looking annoyed, she barely glanced up at them before Miss Riveths gestured at her and the girl went straight back to ignoring them. Against the far wall were a set of huge windows showing the ice filled ocean and growing snowstorm whirling outside, to the far right was a fireplace that was big enough for someone to stand up in with room to spare that spanned nearly the whole wall. Probably a Floo connection, Harry decided. Framing the window were bookshelves and opposite them was a small office that

Riveths knocked on politely.

An elderly woman that Harry recognised from his prospectus as the strange Alice Hyuga who had the absurdly young husband answered it. She wasn't much different from her picture, her face was lined and aged, but still held a hint of that classical beauty that she must have been as a young woman, her snow white hair was pulled back into a bun with a pale blue ribbon, she wore a neat long pale blue dress with a white collar, and a white shawl draped across her shoulders, around her neck was a bronze crucifix. Harry shifted nervously as her clear sapphire blue eyes flickered over them before resting on him.

She smiled warmly, "A new student?" she asked stepping forward with a book tucked under her arm.

"Indeed. Mister Potter, allow me to introduce Healer Alice Hyuga, one of the greatest Light Sorceresses in the world. Her husband Yuri Hyuga teaches Physical Defence," Laerer Riveths explained with a polite nod to the old woman, "Alice, this is Harry Potter, a prospective student from England. Our youngest yet. Could you give him a check up? I have some concerns," the Greek/Finn Veela explained with a significant look at the other woman.

The old woman nodded easily, "Of course. Hop on the nearest bed please, it shouldn't take too long," she said gesturing him to the row of beds behind him. Nervously, Harry hopped up onto one and wedged his hands between his knees to stop himself from fidgeting. The old woman laid her book out in front of her, it was thin and... Harry frowned, it LOOKED like it was made of roughly stitched together leather. "_Ouranos, Ouranos, Ouranos_," the old woman intoned softly lifting her hands away from the book, leaving it floating in place without support.

White light gathered in her hands and suddenly ribbons of purple and orange unravelled from him to wrap around her instead.

She lowered her hands slowly, staring at him for a long moment, her expression inscrutable, before she smiled a little lopsidedly. "One moment please," she requested before moving back into her office, leaving her book levitating in mid-air.

A moment later she returned with a small white stone. "Hold onto this for a second while I cast the scanning spell again," she told him before using that odd incantation once again. Harry glanced down at the warm stone in his hand, it was a dirty off yellow nub of, well, he thought it was sandstone, but it wasn't quite. It had a strange feeling to it, despite being oddly warm in his hand.

Alice hummed as she collected her book, turning to Miss Riveths, "His health isn't as good as I would like," she admitted slowly, blue eyes canting to his relatives for a heartbeat before snapping back to the deputy headmistress. "He is severely underweight for his age and shows signs of delayed development due to long term malnutrition, likely as not he will not begin puberty until his mid-teens and will remain stunted in terms of height and weight. He will need some dentistry aid as his teeth are... not as good as they could be. Magically speaking though, an accelerated learning plan would be essential as the poor boy's magic is showing signs of stagnating already," the old woman explained making Aunt Petunia splutter in

indignation. Vernon however nodded importantly.

"Gotta raise these freaks with a firm hand," he bragged importantly, his wife going grey in horror as he blurted out their best kept secret to the very people that could never know it it! "Gave the little freeloader exactly what he deserved, a good wallop to keep him in line, and scraps from the bin to keep him working," he boasted, unaware of how both women stared at him, Miss Riveths in increasingly dark rage, and Mrs Hyuga with her hand over her mouth in horror.

"Vernon!" Aunt Petunia moaned fearfully, grabbing at his arm.

"I see," Miss Riveths choked out, her eyes narrow. "Alice, would you please keep an eye on Mister Potter while I escort our guests to the Headmistress? I'm sure they will be very interested in what she has to offer them," the blonde woman ground out through her perfect pearly white teeth.

Alice nodded firmly, "Of course. I'll call up for some brunch, how does that sound, Harry?" she asked, smiling at the twelve year old as her colleague nodded and sharply gestured at the Dursleys to follow her.

"I â€" I uh," he spluttered uncertainly, wanting to interject but what could he say when his Uncle had just outed the whole sorry thing to them himself? When the Healing spells showed them? "I don't want to inconvenience anyone," he managed to get out, glancing nervously after his Aunt and Uncle. Not particularly out of any concern for them, though he did give a passing thought to wonder what would befall them now, but not wanting to be left alone with a woman he still wasn't 100% sure wasn't a pervert after young men.

"No inconvenience. I insist," she assured him before gesturing him to her office. Reluctantly, he followed, gripping the little stone tightly in his hand and mentally vowing to run the second she so much as looked at him funny as he glanced back at the other students, the girl staring at him in pity. He flushed when he realised that she'd heard the whole thing and ducked his head, feeling his ears burn in embarrassment and shame. Thankfully the old woman left the door open and kept up a cheery stream of aimless chatter as she filled a teapot and rummaged a few bits to eat out of tins amongst the utter mess of her office.

Harry could only stare in astonishment at the huge array of quite frankly random objects on her shelves and tables. Some of which were quite pretty, others quite frightening. She had an old book covered in lurid red bloodstains sat next to an old slightly moth-eaten teddy bear wearing a bronze pocket watch, perched beside it was a doll made of twigs and twine, it smiled at the old woman as she passed, not maliciously, but a genuine happy smile that actually looked kind of cute, if horrifying because it was coming from what Harry tentatively identified as a voodoo doll. Slips of neatly stacked paper talismen covered in Chinese characters and delicate paintings of birds in cedar wood boxes, what looked like a very crude lottery ticket pinned to a shelf next to a collection of cards, a serpent, a moon, and a star. And shockingly of all, a beautiful white winged crucifix inlaid with unknown blue jewels, about the size of his palm â€" he hadn't thought magic users were into Christianity, or religion at all in general.

Alice smiled when she saw where he was looking, "My old equipment," she admitted fondly, "Back in my younger years I was quite the exorcist for hire. I travelled through Asia and Europe helping people with all manner of problems. It's how I met my husband, I got myself into a spot of trouble with the Japanese army and he rescued me. We ended up stopping some rather nasty warlocks from summoning powers they ought not to have." She sighed wistfully as she picked up the crucifix, "I almost miss those days of endless travel, even the uncomfortable train carriages and coaches. We were so sure back then, so pure..." she trailed off lovingly.

Harry swallowed, "So, you met your husband when you were young?" he asked curiously. Looked like he was right to think the 'young' man wasn't human.

She laughed, "Oh yes. I think I had just turned twenty some two months before hand, Yuri was... Oh goodness I couldn't begin to remember, somewhere between twenty one and twenty three I think. He hasn't changed much over the years while I've aged and now look like old leather," she laughed as she hugged the crucifix to her chest tightly.

"Cutest leather I ever saw," a male voice interrupted. Harry jolted and whirled around as Alice laughingly cried a pleased "Yuri!". It was her husband. Still impossibly young seeming for someone so old, he was wild, there was no other word for it. Messy brown hair that was just as untamable as Harry's own, a face like a blade, cocky smirk and challengingly inhuman amber-red eyes, powerfully muscled but wiry, he wore loose casual clothes, a plain pair of black jeans and army boots, and a red T-shirt. He wouldn't have looked out of place in the muggle world if not for those eyes and the aura of barely restrained violence. But the way he looked at Alice... Warm and soft, as if she hung the moon and stars for him and made the world worth living. Harry blushed a little, feeling like a voyeur just being there.

"Who's the munchkin?" he asked playfully, winking down at the twelve year old. Harry grinned, ducking his head shyly and decided that he liked this man already.

"Harry Potter, one of our new prospective students," Alice answered, smiling sweetly as the wild man kissed her cheek and casually looped his arms around her in a tight hug before turning so she could lean back against his chest.

"No kidding?" the amber eyed man asked, eyeing him speculatively before grinning, "You'll have to come by during our Upper Year lesson, give you an idea of what the future holds if you stick around."

"We were just talking about our old adventures, Harry was quite interested in my equipment," Alice explained, holding up her crucifix. Yuri rested his chin on top of her head with a nostalgic smile on his face.

"Good times. Christ they were insane though. Hey kid, did you ever learn what fucked up Shanghai back in 1915?"

Harry cast his mind back but he couldn't remember anything, slowly he

shook his head and guessed, "An earthquake?" he queried.

Yuri scoffed, "Naw, us. Some shit for brains - "

"Yuri!" Alice scolded, nudging him.

"Sorry, some idiot decided that since Japan were invading an' everything they needed to make a clear line in the sand. So he decided to summon an Earth Deity to erase Japan off the map."

Harry gaped, "How is that a _line in the sand?_" he squawked.

Yuri grinned wildly, "Supposedly he wanted to make it a warning to the West, going 'we're powerful enough to erase countries leave us alone already we've had enough'. Didn't quite work out though. He died during the attempt, it takes a stupidly HUGE amount of power to activate a Mandela of Hell, especially one that's been inverted. Not to mention he needed to seal away the four gods of direction and desecrate the Nine Heavens' Taoist Magics to even get it started. But yeah, idiot died, and his not so little god-monster went feral. Set Shanghai on fire."

"Yuri tried to stop it," Alice mused quietly, her eyes far away as she stroked her husband's wrist with a withered hand, "He managed to take it away into Europe and seal it, but it drove him mad in the process. I spent... months looking for him. It was pure luck, _pure luck_, that Master Zhuzhen and I found him again. I was able to bring his mind back, but it was a steep price to pay," she lamented before smiling as she leaned her head back against him, "Worth it though. And one I would pay again quite gladly."

Yuri's wild grin turned soppy as he looked down at her, dropping a kiss into the crown of her forehead.

From there, they spent what felt like just over an hour and a half going through Mrs Hyuga's collection of items, the two eagerly telling him what was what, how they were made, even pointing out the ones he himself would learn to make, though some of them couldn't be remade. Such as the small teddybear on Alice's shelf, she called it Leonardo's Bear, supposedly it had been left behind in a cabin of a ghost ship, because of the spiritual energies it had been absorbing in the years before its discovery, she claimed it made death curses in-effectual. Harry wondered if he had ever possessed something similar as a child to deflect the Killing Curse. The beautiful winged crucifix was one that he would learn to recreate, apparently it was a replica itself of a crucifix found on the chest of a giant god statue excavated from the ruins of Zafra. She even showed him dried herbs, seeds, and roots of various plants that had special powers that had fallen out of common knowledge amongst magic users simply because they were _too_ simple. People had gotten into the mind-set that magic and magical herbs had to be complex and difficult to grow and handle.

"While it is true that some plants are difficult to grow, such as Mana Leaf, and what many mistake as a simple hallucinogen such as Pure Leaf, you'll be learning how to distil and extract their magical essences in Alchemy lessons, something only for those students who excel in their Potions' class," Alice explained as she showed off a blue bottle that smelt sweet and glowed through the container.

Yuri laughed, "And with the resources and students here, that wrinkled old bean gets the best of the best!" he explained referring to the Potion's professor, Roger Bacon, or Nicholas Flamel, which ever he was referring to himself as.

Harry smiled awkwardly, "Guess that rules me out then," he mused.

"Maybe, maybe not," Yuri hedged with a grin, "You're the youngest go-getter we've seen so far, you've got time."

Alice smiled at him as she gave him a small green fan-shaped leaf, it looked like a miniature palm tree frond that was barely the size of his palm, and he had fairly small hands by comparison. "The problem I've found with this school... is that the facilities are amazing, the students are powerful, the teachers are gifted. You have all the resources open to you, and that creates an expectation that can crush a person," she explained sadly as she gestured at him to eat it. "I often see students on the verge of complete melt-downs and burn outs from over work and over stress. The reason Artemis brought you in to see me was to assess whether or not the stress of the high pressure learning environment would cause you any health issues beyond the norm."

Harry chewed the leaf nervously, but felt himself become calmer as he did so, not quite at peace, but almost as if he felt a little braver, a bit more confident in himself. "And... would it?" he asked hesitantly, recalling that she mentioned something about his magic showing signs of being stagnant. And something about acceleration.

"It would actually be good for you," she admitted as she rummaged a small wooden token from her desk and handed it over. "You have much the same problem with your magic as I did when I was young, it is vast and powerful, and it threatens to overflow from you like water from a cup." Harry swore in surprise when the token she handed him burst into life, growing branches and vines until he dropped it on the floor where it writhed for a moment and burst into flower. Huge white five petal lilies splitting open glaring a blinding white up at them. Alice nodded as if expecting it while Yuri looked surprised and whistled in a mix of amusement and awe, "The excessive magical drain the courses would provide would give you the magical work out you need. If you had continued with such minor acts of magic and long periods of disuse, you would have stunted your magical potential by at least half," the woman explained even further as she bent down and picked up the token. She tucked it into a plant pot and handed it over to him with a smile. "However, I can't say anything about how your mental health would handle such high expectations, I am sorry."

Yuri chuckled, "He can handle it," the man declared assuredly, Harry looked over at him, a little shocked that he would be so certain after having only known him for such a short amount of time. The older man grinned, "I can tell. You'll survive, you've got that look in your eye. Seen it before."

"I'm not so good at academic stuff," he admitted nervously.

Alice laughed, "Neither is Yuri," she confided.

"Still saved the world and got the girl," the amber eyed man boasted proudly.

"No one is good at academics when they first begin to learn, Mister Potter," an unknown voice interrupted, making the twelve year old jump and whip around. A new woman was stood in the door way to Mrs Hyuga's office, one that Harry hesitantly identified from his prospectus as the Headmistress, Catherine Winter. "That is the whole point of a school, to teach." She smiled then, a small, sly little thing that changed her face from predatory to mischevious, "I imagine you'll have a fair bit to teach us yourself in the time you're here if what my Hogwarts contemporaries tell me of your adventures is true," she added.

Harry blushed furiously.

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****And that's a wrap. Okay, usually I hate answering reviews IN the fic, but some folk just don't sign in and I think a lot of people are probably sharing these questions and since they decided not to check my facebook page (link in my profile), they won't have the answers or be able to ask them directly.****

****Regarding Age Rating:**** I'm well aware of the age rating rules Guest Reviewer, it's fine. If it reaches a point where I need to up the rating to something more appropriate, I will. But for now T-for-teen is fine. At the moment, the worst we will see is bad language, allusions to past child abuse, and maybe a few fight scenes. At best. And please bare in mind, Niflheim isn't going to be like Miranda Flairgold's Akren, so it isn't going to be super-violent student vs student internal civil war.

****Regarding Pairings and Sex:**** Harry is twelve at present. He has no pairing at present. Please do not ever accuse me of writing pedo porn again. In fact, I'm going out on a limb here and guessing you've never read ANY of my fics before and take this moment to reassure you and any other wary new reader: ****I do not write sex scenes.**** The only fic I have with such scenes is a facebook exclusive writing experiment where I tried to broaden my horizons and promptly realised that the only way I was ever going to manage that scene was if I had a bottle of rum close at hand. Sufficed to say, there will be zero sex scenes in Niflheim. There will be mentions of other characters in sexual relationships, but nothing explicit.

****Regarding Slash and my Readership:**** I am primarily a Slash writer. So I really don't give a damn if people don't like it to be perfectly honest because it is entirely non-graphic, relationship focused, and most of my regular readers are cool with it, ergo, people whom I communicate with often via facebook and reviews, people whose opinions actually do matter to me. I also notice you seem to give no comment about the foreshadowed and warned of lesbian relationships... Hm.

****Regarding the Crossover aspect:**** What crossover section would you recommend I put this fic into, since there are minor crossovers with seven other works of fiction/games? Apologies but no. These are minor crossovers and fusions in that I am borrowing concepts, characters, and magic systems from all of these works and weaving them into this fic, there's too much to shunt into any one crossover category and

thus, like most writers, I am shoehorning it into the main one.

****Regarding Harry Potter characters and my OCs:**** Harry has been expelled from Hogwarts yes, but that doesn't mean he a/ won't ever go back, or b/ have no contact with anyone from Hogwarts. He still has Hedwig, Ron isn't an asshole, and Voldemort isn't just going to ignore him because he's out of the country. As for my OCs, Niflheim is my branching out, so to speak. I feel I've reached a point in my readership to attempt showing off my own original characters in a world-setting that I've created and seeing how they respond to it, what they think of those people and places as I do wish to eventually begin writing my own original work. I'm just slowly introducing more of my own personal brand of fiction into already established works to see how people respond. I would like honest opinions on these characters from reviewers as well please.

****TL;DR summary:**** _Age rating will go up if it needs to " not before, I don't do sex scenes, Harry has no pairing at present because twelve, I write slash " get over it, there will be lesbians in future " I see you have no problem with this, I'm keeping this fic exactly where it is because there's too much shit crammed into it to put it into one crossover category over another, Hogwarts will still be a thing in future, I want to know what people think of my original characters and world building because I plan to actually get published somewhen in future so feedback would be appreciated._

****Whew. So yeah, reviews very very ****very**** welcome.****

End
file.